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HAPPINESS,
THE PEARL OF LIFE.

141. d.

216.





HAPPINESS,
THE PEARL OF LIFE;

An Offering to the Young

IN THE HIGHER CIRCLES.

BY S. S. JONES.

AUTHOR OF 'INTEGRITY,' "BEATRICE," "THE
HEAVENWARD ROAD," ETC., ETC.

"THE FASHION OF THIS WORLD PASSETH



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PREFACE.

WHILE inditing the MS. of this little work, the writer has been describing no phantom light, that promises to cheer, but leads to danger ; she has not been speaking of an imaginary happiness, an *ignis fatuus* of the human brain, but of that which has shed glorious light on her

own path in life ; cheered and sustained her in seasons of *deep trial*, and been her sweetest enjoyment amid the sunshine of existence. She writes from *experience*, not from *speculation* ; and therefore presents her *little* "offering" to those to whom it is inscribed, with that confidence which an assurance of its *truth* engenders. The book on first glancing over its pages, may not seem so attractive as the young reader would wish it to be ; it may not have the *glitter* of sub-

ject, which many other “offerings” to the youthful have ; yet, nevertheless, the *subject* this treats of is *sterling gold* ; it is of priceless value, therefore, reader, *give* it thine attention.

The heart of the writer, as she pens these lines, feels a sweet assurance that to *some* of her fellow-beings, her little “offering” will be of service ; because she trust that the “Father of spirits” will deign to add his blessing to her work.

Reader, ask him to make it a blessing to *thine* heart; *His* Spirit can make it powerful to increase thine happiness.



HAPPINESS, THE PEARL OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT does God design for his creatures?—

Who embitters their cup of life?—When, and whence, comes happiness?—For what purpose has God given to those in the elevated ranks, their powerful influence.—

What is noble and Godlike?—Our best of friends.—Our bitterest of foes.—Ambition, and the desire of happiness.—What happiness is right in the sight of heaven?—Nobleness of true ambition.—The *right* and the *wrong* path in life.—*Noble patriotism.*

WHAT is happiness? It is the soul's *sunshine*; it is the summer light,

and life, and beauty of the immortal spirit.

Who is happiness designed for ? The Creator of all designed it for all his creatures ; but the *enemy* of souls has robbed many of them of the blessing. Instead of the bliss which God designed for them, upon thousands of human hearts, sorrow, disquiet, disappointment, *desolation* ! has been shed by that cruel adversary of the race.

What human heart has not, in a more or less degree, experienced this ? Lofty station exempts not from it. The noblest, the most talented, the wealthiest, the most honoured ; those around whom circles

all that this world can give, of grace, and dignity, and beauty, have their portion of this *mingled* cup.

Nevertheless, *still* there is a constant looking for, and desiring to attain, the primeval blessedness ; a fond yearning of the heart for the sweetness of this native air, as it were, of the human soul. Like the flower that has been transplanted from a sunnier climate, and placed amid the rocks and barrenness of a northern region, it still turns to the *sun*, that was wont to pour its full tide of light and warmth upon it in its native home. The flower may die in that far-off region, chilled and

blighted by the destroying blast. So may the immortal *soul*. Human hearts have been broken in this world; human souls have been *destroyed here*; yet, thank God, there is no *necessity* for an immortal spirit to be ruined in this present life. Satan has striven hard to cause such a necessity; but the Redeemer overcame him in his mightiest effort. Ours is a world of *probation*! and the Almighty Benefactor has made it possible for every one to attain final happiness; because every one who will follow *His* directions, may attain everlasting life.

It is possible to have much of *heaven* on the road to heaven;

much of happiness even in this world. Look round upon it in its beauty ; see how much there is yet left that blooms brightly, like the blessedness of Paradise. True, it is a marred and blemished world we live in ; but still, by the light that revelation gives us, we can see by what it now is, how glorious a world it shall be when the blight that sin has brought upon it has passed away. And as it shall be with the world, so it is in individual cases ; as *sin* is cast out of the *heart*, streams of the peace and blessedness of heaven enters.

It is sad to think of the darkening shadows that so often suddenly

come over earth's glorious pictures. How many bright and beautiful homes Death enters! He lays his hand upon the human flowers there; and womanly grace and beauty, and manly vigour, and the loveliness of childhood, fade at the icy touch. But still we must not be discouraged, for there *is* happiness to be enjoyed, even while only travellers to the land in which it *dwells*.

The sun that sheds it is in heaven, but the beams come down to earth; and as the flower that awakes earliest, and turning towards the sun-rising, catches the *first* beams of the rising day, so does the heart

that turns early to *that* Sun of life, gain soonest the genial beams of the happiness for which the Almighty formed it.

It is a blessed thing to *gain* happiness; and a blessed thing to lead others to gain it. This little work is addressed to those who ere long may have great *influence* in society; great moral influence to do good, or to do evil, in the world in which God has placed them. *Time, talents, money*; the sweet *associations* of social life; the power of their *example* on those around them: these are all moral *levers*, which God has placed in their hands, to raise their fellow-beings to a higher

grade in the scale of happiness. It is a diffusive and re-acting principle; the more we shed around us, the more of it there will come into our own hearts; and the more true happiness there is resting *there*, the more blessedly it will radiate on those around.

It is *noble* and *Godlike* to diffuse happiness; it is a work worthy of the immortal spirit; worthy of the highest intellectual powers; one in which the finest and most varied talents can be employed blissfully; one which adds a dignity and grace to the highest station; one which can give a finish and beauty, only *less than* celestial, to the finest hu-

man character that ever graced the world.

God is ever seeking the true happiness of his creatures; Satan is ever seeking to deceive them into sorrow: he sweeps over this earth of ours, sometimes like the fierce blast of the tornado, sometimes like the pestilence, walking *stealthily* upon the air; he has strewn the earth with *wrecks* of happiness, and is ever aiming to dash from human lips the cup of life for *ever*.

“Earth is a chequered scene.” It is God who gave the light and brightness; Satan gives the darkness, desolation, and *despair*. Ours at the present is a mingled cup;—

God gives the sweetness, Satan gives the sorrow ; his plans are laid deeply, his cruelty is *intense*. No hatred is so bitter as his hatred ; and, Reader ! the malice of that foe plans nothing for *thee* but *sorrow* ! He may cover the snares he lays with roses ; and with the syren song of pleasure he will seek to lead thee into *ruin* ; but remember, however it be disguised at the onset, it will be ruin still. God looketh down from the heights of his holiness, regarding earnestly the evil and the good. He sees the enemy, and understands fully all his plans ; sees how he studies where the human heart is most assailable ; knows how cruel

his machinations ; and knows how deep is the destruction to which he seeks to lead. God knows all this, and he *loves* humanity ; therefore are the warnings of the Gospel given.

Happiness is the *Pearl* of Life ; and an unimaginable price was paid by the Redeemer to secure it for us. Oh shall we not love *him* who has done so much for us ?

There is much said of *ambition*, in this world ; by some it is admired greatly, by others it is sternly re- prehended. The desire for *happi- ness* is spoken of *as* variously. And yet ambition is a *noble* principle ; but then it must be a *hallowed* am-

bition. The desire for happiness is *right* ; but then it must be a *sanctified* desire. Its gratification must be attained through *right channels*, and it must be sought for in *right objects*. It must be a happiness which gives *elevation to character* ; or it is not a happiness that is right in the sight of heaven : for God delights in that which truly ennoble his creatures ; Satan delights in that which brings degradation upon them.

The ambition which looks no further than this world, is in a *mistake* ; it is *unworthy* of the name it bears. *True* ambition looks beyond earth ; its path is pure, holy, and

noble in this world,—but its *aim* is not here, it lies beyond, it is *above*. Its consummation is brightness; its reward is glory. The home it leads to is the celestial land; the companions it contemplates are the redeemed and glorified; its fruition is all the ineffable bliss prepared for those who, in *God's* sight, have been the most truly noble of the children of earth.

If the path of those to whom these pages are addressed be chosen *rightly*, they may add a grace and dignity to their rank, such as their rank can never confer upon them; and give a stamp of high nobility to their position in life, which no mere

outward or earthly dignity can ever reach. But they *may* act otherwise, and both degrade themselves and disgrace the elevated circles in which they are called to move.

“ *The fashion of this world passeth away!* and all the beautiful insignia of rank must, after a series of years, be laid *aside*;—others shall wear them, and speak of those who now, in the bright season of youth, are looking forward to a brilliant course through life, as amongst their forerunners who have died. The true character of each individual will then show itself; the season for deceiving flattery will have passed away; and if

the departed have acted their part nobly, they will be spoken of as amongst the *truly great*. Their admirable example will stimulate others to lofty purpose; and as their excellence shall be spoken of, a glow of rich enthusiasm will thrill the hearts of the hearers, who will be strengthened to resist evil, and energized to pursue good. If it have been the reverse of this, and a wrong road in life have been taken; if vices have usurped the place of lofty virtue in the heart; and sordid self, and self-gratification, and vanity, and frivolity have taken the place where true-hearted and noble benevolence of character,

and high and exalted purpose, should have carried sway,—the kindest feeling they will excite will be pity; but the more general, will be stern abhorrence and contempt.

Who, amongst the youthful sons and daughters of the noblest circles of the realm, would wish to be thus regarded? With such an example upon the *Throne*, the youthful branches of patrician families may well aspire to high rank in *excellence*; may well seek to give a grace to their position, and to become *blessings* in the earth.

This is the *noblest* patriotism! *the* glory of the land will be-

come brighter, as the characters of its children take a loftier standing.

If purity of principle, and nobleness of purpose, and undeviating truth, and public-spirited benevolence, *reign* in the hearts of those who form the *high* circles of our country, how wide and *powerful* will be their sweep of influence! how *ennobling* for our country! how *blessed* for the world!

Numbers of elevated rank stand already as bulwarks in the land; gracing their own position in society, and shedding an influence that is replete with blessings on those around. But *all* do not.

... pleasures of life
frivolities of vain pur-
sue the noble powers of
tal spirits,—powers given
the loftiest purpose, even
imitating *God!*—the *Great*
factor!—in doing *good*
earth.

Oh! in things like these
noble to be ambitious. Who
wish to spend this life in
The acquisition of
vain

but the ambition which seeks to *attain*, and to *diffuse*, true *excellence* and *happiness*, is *noble*,—it is *great* !



CHAPTER II.

WHAT is the first requisite in order to do good?—Who can help the fallen nature?—What will God not withhold from us?—What great work have all to perform?—What is true happiness ever based on?—Who scoff at these things?—And why?—Why cannot the world satisfy our wish for happiness?—To whom is earth no place of gloom?—What *is* dreary to his eye?—The two kinds of happiness.—The nature and effects of each.

IN order to enable an individual to *do* good in the world, one of the chief preparations is to *get* good; to get it in the *heart*, that it may be diffused by the life. When God created man at the first, he was *upright*; pure in motive, innocent

in intention, holy in *heart*. Man fell, and his nature became altogether changed ; he became *literally* a *fallen* being ; lost his high estate of purity ;—his motives were blemished,—his intentions were blemished,—his heart was blemished,—his thoughts, feelings, actions, *all* blemished and tarnished by sin ; his judgment became clouded,—his tastes vitiated,—his affections degraded,—his powers weakened. Such is the nature that we all inherit ; *how* then can such do *good* in the world ?

Such a question as this might be asked for ever, without any satisfactory reply being given, if *human*

power were all that we have to depend upon for aid. But it *is* not. He who created man pure at the first, will *re-purify* his nature; will *aid* his weakness and imperfection in this world; and *perfect* him in the world to come. Man is himself impoverished, both in spiritual purity and physical and intellectual strength; but he has a rich *treasury* to go to; and God will grant him *all* the assistance that he needs.

There is nothing which human beings of any rank can require to enable them to act a noble part in life, and pass through the course of their earthly pilgrimage doing and receiving good, which God has not

in store for them; and which will not be given them, if sought in prayer.

How *beautiful*, through life, is the course of those who early in youth *seek* the guidance and aid of the God of Heaven! and are led by him, through this world of sin and error, in the paths of *purity* and *truth*. Feeling their own inefficiency, they seek God's assistance for the great work laid out for them, and those who seek it will receive it. Whatever be an individual's station, he has a *great* work to do while he lives! he has to glorify the God who formed him, to advance the cause of the Saviour who re-

deemed him,—he has to be a blessing to those with whom he may be associated, and he has to see to it that the enemy of souls lure him not into the second death.

It is a perfect *impossibility*, for any human being to *do* this, unassisted by the spirit of God. How beautiful, then, and how suited to our need is that prayer of the Church, “*Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name.*” The human heart by nature *now*, is a desolated shrine; but when that Spirit purifies, and re-enters its ruined temple, its de-

gradation ceases ; and that blessed habitant causes the work of renovation to go on through all its powers. The work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is a changing one, giving holiness where sin reigned. This innate sinfulness may be covered by the polish of education ; may be softened by natural loveliness of temper ; but till the Holy Spirit renovates the *nature*, the blight of *sin* is *there* ! so that it can never enter heaven ! and never perform aright the Christian's duties upon earth.

True religion can never be gained without the help and teaching of the Holy Ghost ! and the precious

pearl, true happiness, does not exist, apart from true religion.

Religion is the *basis*; happiness the *superstructure*. Religion is the path; happiness is found therein; and how lustrously does the path of the real Christian *increase* in purity and bliss. Passing out from the degradation of unholy feeling, into the brightness of the pure in heart, both motives and actions gradually lose the blemishing tarnish of imperfect Christianity; and whether their fellow-beings perceive it in its full extent or not, the influence such diffuse around them is elevating in its nature, and purifying in its *effects*. These as they

pass away from earth, have not to listen to the awful sentence, "Depart from me ye cursed." No; "Come, ye blessed of my Father," are the words that greet their ears; "inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Yes, "*prepared!*" for those who *follow* Christ.

The triflers of this world scoff at religion; it is little wonder they do so, encompassed as they are by the clouds of their own foolishness, they cannot *perceive* either its worth or beauty. These are to be pitied, as much as censured; for the time hastens rapidly when they will receive an awful conviction of its

value. They are like children rushing over the edge of a yawning gulf, because some butterfly flies on before them.

Happiness is the Pearl of Life ; religion is the means of attaining it. It is the "pearl of *great* price," offered by the King of Heaven to those who fulfil certain conditions ; religion is the fulfilment of these.

"Come unto me," says the Redeemer.

Religion *is* that "coming."

"Believe on me," saith the King of saints.

Religion *is* that believing on Jesus, as the only way of salvation.

“Come out from among them,” saith the Holy One.

Religion *is* the coming out from among those who make the world their God.

“Give me thine heart,” saith the Lord Almighty.

Religion *is* the surrendering of the affections to the Lord; it is a *sweet* service; for the heart there finds its resting place.

“Learn of me,” saith Jesus.

Religion *is* that learning of the most ennobling and blissful of all lessons, *imitation* of the *character* of God.

Religion, that is *true* religion, apart from all *cant*, and *bigotry*, and *superstition*, and *intolerance*,

gives happiness ; bestows upon its possessor the *Pearl* of Life.

There is a yearning in the human heart for a deeper and richer happiness, than any thing which belongs to this world only, *can* give. The powers of the soul cannot be limited to earth, without a *feeling* of imprisonment ; a sadness which belongs to *captivity*, coming over it. How often, while the individual was unconscious of its cause, has this feeling crept over the heart, even when surrounded by all the fascinating *shows* of life ; sometimes amid the whirl of excitement it has been quieted, but only to awake again, with an aching *weariness* of

spirit. “The fashion of this world passeth away ;” and the human soul is *immortal* ! That which is evanescent, *cannot* satisfy that which shall endure for ever ; the powers and the affections formed to enjoy the eternal, cannot *rest* in the fleeting vanities of earth. They are far too noble, even now ; fallen and faded as they are.

To the real Christian, earth is no place of *gloom*, far from it ; *he* sees, even over its roughest surface, a pathway that leads upward to the brighter land.

Sin is dark to his eye ; it is *very* dreary. Those whom the God of this world has blinded, see not the fearful abyss into which the path of

the sinner is leading him ; but the real Christian *does* see it ; and he shrinks from the path with horror.

Blindness to danger is not safety ; but it is all the *appearance* of safety which the sinner has. *Blindness to danger* is not *true happiness* ; but if this blindness be removed, where is the sinner's *joy* ?

There are two *kinds* of happiness in the world ; the *true* and the *false*. The true is *unfading, increasing, eternal*. The false soon perishes, and it is a masked *enemy*, who, beneath a smiling guise, conceals the glare of malice ; promising bliss, it plants the sting of sorrow ; and arrayed in the garb of pleasure, its

folds conceal the ghastliness of *death*. The so-called pleasures of the world give *this* kind of happiness ; but the book of God is guide to the happiness that never fades, never palls upon the senses, never deceives, never injures. The more we have of it, the more richly we enjoy it. It is a happiness *suited* to the immortal *nature* of the human soul ; it raises its possessor from the ruins of his fallen state as a descendant of Adam ; it *reinvigorates*, and *rightly directs* all the *powers* of the soul ; it *regulates* the *affections*, it *purifies* the *thoughts*, it *rectifies* the *principles*, it *sanctifies* the *heart*. Is not *such* a happiness the *Pearl of Life*?

CHAPTER III.

TRAVELLERS ; what is requisite in this dangerous journey ? what is sweet to us ? and why ?—In what do the celestials find their happiness.—What is destruction ?—What is Heaven ?—What can the service of God do ?—What is the source of happiness ?—Spring, an emblem ; and of what ?—What effect has dedication to God, on all that tends to give influence to character ?—Question interesting to all ; reply.—Who is our tenderest and most efficient helper ?—Noble example for the youthful, in the character of our Sovereign.—Natural question, and reply to it ; Second question and reply.—What is religion ?—What enfranchises the heart from the snares of sin ?

SUPPOSING two individuals were to set out on a journey together, each having to travel by different paths ; suppose the road of the one lay

through a low and level country, where, though perhaps poorly accommodated, he might yet travel on in safety; while the road of the other led him by perilous paths, amid mountain fastnesses, where yawning gulfs lay sometimes almost beneath his feet. To which of these travellers would eye-sight and a guide be most indispensable? surely to the one that had the high and perilous road to travel; so is it with those who are placed in the elevated ranks of life; if they miss their footing, their fall is greater, their case more perilous; their responsibilities are heavier than those in the humbler walks of life, and,

if it be possible, they have more need of a guide who is in heaven.

Shall the young, then, in these elevated circles, venture upon taking this dangerous journey *without* this guide? will it be wise of them to miss the *sweetness*, as well as *safety*, which is found no where else, than in those roads through which *Jesus* guides his people? *Surely no.*

Happiness is *sweet* to the soul, it cannot be otherwise; for it is its native atmosphere; its native region; its blessed *home*. It is sweet to *thee*, reader; is it *not* so? Thy maker *wishes* thee to possess it. He has prepared it for thee.* He has

* In the plan of redemption.

given a guide book* for the road that leads to it. He will prepare *thee*† to enjoy it rightly. He will rejoice over thee when thou art in possession of it. Happiness is the *Pearl of Life*, and none can give it us but *God*.

“The Lord *reigneth*, let the earth *rejoice*!” said the Psalmist, when contemplating the majesty and *goodness* of God; and well may we, who live amid the brighter revelation of the Gospel, *rejoice*, that in *God’s* hands are placed the reins of government.

The glorious hierarchies of the

* The Bible.

† By his own spirit shed into the heart.

celestial regions, all find their happiness, and glory, in the sweet and sacred service of this King of kings. It is a service of love, therefore it is *blissful*. To be *banished* from God, is *destruction* ! to be *united* to Him is *heaven*. The service of God can ennoble the noblest ; and those who dedicate their powers to him in this world, gain *much* of heaven even here.

The world, with all its tinsel show, *promises* happiness ; but it gives it not, for it has not the power ; God promises it, and he performs. He is *rich* in happiness, and he delights in its bestowment.

He is the *centre* of enjoyment ; and

all that ever blessed either a human or angelic spirit, came from him. The nearer, therefore, that we approach to him, and the more we assimilate to him in character, so much the more diffusively can we spread happiness on earth.

After the cold and desert winter, God sheds around us the warmth, and verdure, and beauty, of the spring ; so does he shed his spirit upon the human heart, when it seeks to *know* and *serve* him. Such also are its *effects*, and they are but forerunners of the glorious summer of the skies.

All the polish, and elegance, and intellectual power, and moral influence which education gives ; all

the superiority of rank and station ; all the influence which wealth gives its possessor, becomes hallowed, becomes beautified, becomes *glorified*, by being dedicated to God's service. And a crown that gives no thorns to its possessor, is laid up in heaven by the Almighty, for those who serve him *here*.

Kings and princes have served the Redeemer, Christ Jesus, and it has shed the richest lustre round their names. It has thrown around them a *moral grandeur*, which has far outshone the splendour of their earthly diadems ; for "*Them that honour me, I will honour*," is not said in vain by the Lord of Hosts.

The question now rises, "How shall this service be begun?" The reply is, "by prayer;" and wherever there is a sincere *wish* to serve God, there is He to render the help, and give the instruction needed.

God is a *spirit*! and how beautifully adapted is such an one, to hold communion with the spirits of his creatures. His nature is *purity, benevolence, love*! His attributes are, *Omni-presence, Omnipotence, Omniscience*! He is ever *with* his people; his power is every ready to be exercised in their favour; his eye scanneth all the designs of their enemies; how *inestimable* is such a *friend*!

Who can understand so accurately as the Redeemer, all the movements of the heart that is setting itself to seek acquaintance with *Him*? Who can unravel so perfectly the mystic web of its emotion? Who can detect so surely all the dangerous *self*-deception, that may lurk, unperceived by others, amid the heart's deep windings? Who can deal so tenderly in removing the hidden idols that are cherished there? *so* tenderly, indeed, that the heart itself shall be made willing to give them up. Who! creation. cannot shew his equal, for wisdom, for tenderness, for *love*.

The eye of this all-seeing God

being over *all* the earth, marking the movements both of individuals and nations, who, in times like these, is so fitted to be a counsellor of the young in the higher ranks of a land like ours? Foremost among the nations, in all true and moral grandeur; long may these realms maintain the noble place that God has given them; long may the sovereign that now rules over them, sway her sceptre of righteousness and love. May the youthful generation in the upper ranks emulate earnestly her beautiful example; and while seeking as individuals, to be Christians not in name alone, may they add increasing grace to their high position, and shed an ele-

vating and hallowing influence on society at large.

“Ah! but,” some young reader may say, “if we decide to become religious, what will the world say?” Why, if the world be in its right mind, what *can* it say? but that you have acted nobly and well; and that your decision is a mark of wisdom. If it be *not* in its right mind, surely what it says can avail but little.

The foolish, giddy triflers who are wasting their own existence, may cover their heart-misgivings with the smile of pretended pity; but *beneath* the mask, there is the secret wish, that they themselves could decide *rightly*; there is the aching of a

troubled conscience ; the aching *void* of a heart formed to be the temple of its God. *Their* affections were not given them either to centre in themselves, or to be wasted on the vain frivolities of life ; they were formed to take an *upward* direction, and raise their possessors to happiness and heaven. But instead of this, they are grovelling in the *dust*. The mistake brings its own unhappiness. They live in a fever of existence, fancying that the fever-flush is joy ! Time is hasting rapidly. The wasted life must be *all* accounted for. *Would* that they were *wise*, that they would *consider* their *latter end*.

Again, it may be asked, "if we decide to become religious characters, how shall we break through all those usages of polished society, which are not in keeping with a religious life?" The reply is, "Ask counsel of *God*." He knows every peculiarity, which may mark the circumstances of those who wish to become his people; and both can and *will* unravel those knots of entanglement, which fetter the spirits that seek to worship Him.

Only let the heart of the inquirer be *sincere*, and no difficulty is too great, or too complex, for God to remove. The Bible is the rule of the Christian's life; and where the *usages of either high or low society*

are contrary to it, they *must* be wrong; if wrong, they *must* be dangerous; if dangerous, it is at the *peril* of the reader, to conform still to them.

Religion is no fettered, narrow, and contracted thing; it is the homage of the redeemed soul, to the Saviour who loved and ransomed it; it is the loving dedication of the life to God; and the sweet clasping of the affections round the things of heaven; it is no exclusive thing, but the heart that possesses it would draw all fellow beings into its own sweet union with heaven.

As light from the spirit of God comes in upon the soul, all that is

sinful loses its attractions, its defects are seen, and it is no longer loved. The fetters fall from the heart which ere while had enthralled it; and the ransomed spirit is *free*, to follow the behests of God.

From this time the character takes a nobler bearing. Its position, as that of a follower of Christ, is loftier, and yet a more beautiful and child-like *humility*, is shed upon the heart. The idols being given up, the Spirit of heaven reigns in the heart more blessedly; duties become easier; and the service of Christ is *sweetness* to the soul.

The *effect* of true religion upon *the heart* is *expansive*; its possessor

loves the *world*, that has been redeemed by Jesus. It is *diffusive*, also, and the one who is actuated by it, seeks to shed around it the happiness he has himself received. How *blessed* is the influence of such an one! Oh, that *all*, who read these pages, may be thus dedicated, and thus made blessings.



CHAPTER IV.

CHARACTER of the present times.—Progress of the Redeemer's reign.—The Pearl of Price ; when it is to be gained ; to whom suited ; when it should be sought.—The study of *what* literature is the most important?—How this literature should be studied.—Parting address to the Reader.

THE present times are marked by a downright earnestness, and steadiness of purpose, in the pursuit of improvement in worldly things ; shall that earnestness and steadiness be wanting in obeying the high behests of the King of heaven ? And while the great purposes of God are being rapidly unfolded, even amid all the *wild conflict* of political changes,

shall the rising generation of the upper ranks of society confine their attention to the frivolities of fashion only? and fritter away the noble powers with which God has endowed them, in the pursuits of mere pleasure, and the vanities of life?

The young and the beautiful, the noble and the gifted, must rally round the standard of Him who redeemed them. He is going forward conquering, and to conquer; and a few years more will see mighty changes, and glorious havoc in the superstitions of the world.

The religion of Jesus is *purifying, rectifying, elevating*; its seat is in the *hearts* of individuals; its sway is

to be over the *nations* of the earth. The Bible is the unerring guide to it; the Spirit of heaven is the teacher who can make it plain; the footstool of Jehovah is the place to gain that spirit; and the brightness of the better land, sheds itself upon the heart as we gain more and more of its enlightening influence. Oh that we were *all* more in *earnest*!

Here, then, is the *Pearl* of price inestimable; namely, that *happiness* which is founded on the precious basis of *religion*; which gives energy to every pure and noble feeling; which expands the heart, and ever seeks to lead fellow-beings to the *source* from whence it derives its

own blessedness ; which *rests* on the *atonement* made by Christ Jesus for the sinful race of Adam ; and actuates with the moral courage requisite to act rightly, in a world like this.

Like armour of adamant, this happiness wards off the attacks of the worldling's ridicule, and gives a disgust to the sinful mis-named pleasures of the world. How *precious* it is ! Reader, have I not named it rightly ? Is not *such* a happiness the *Pearl* of Life ?

Those who know its value will give up all things else to gain *this* pearl ; it is the brightest ornament that gems the crown of royalty ; the

richest gift that is bestowed on man. We see but a shadowed part of its lustre in this world ; but though we can take nothing *else* with us out of the world, we *can* take the blessedness *religion* gives. The darkness of the tomb throws no dimming shadow athwart its beauty ; it comes out from thence with all the glory of the celestial land around it, and *heaven* will be *eternally* the portion of its possessor.

Earth is the place to *gain* it in. Reader ! much that is bright and beautiful may seem to lie before thee in the path of life ; may it *be so* ; and all prove as bright and beautiful as it *appears* ; yet if thou gain *this* blessing,

it will shed a still richer lustre upon it *all*.

It is suited to *every* reader ; to *man*, with his strength, and vigour, and energy, and *high* ambition ; to woman, with her grace and loveliness ; and all those perceptions and attainments of the beautiful, which mark her character. It is suited to the youthful, even to the child, in years ; suited to all, through every grade of their existence ; death has no power to deprive its possessor of it ; and the grave is powerless to blight or fade it. " Seek *first*," then, " the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and all other blessings shall be added to thee, all *will be*, that will

prove blessings ; for “no *good* thing” will God withhold from them that love him ; all that will be *good* for *thee*, will be given to thee.

While the refinements and elegancies of human literature are enjoyed and delighted in ; let not the literature which is *divine*, be neglected for a *single day*. Its light has shed the brightest light upon all others, of earth’s many volumes. Let not then the *fountain* be neglected, while the intellectual and the noble are rejoicing in the streams. It is *delightful* to go to the fountain-head of knowledge, and there drink it, pure and sparkling, as it flows from *God*.

Let us look round upon our country ; see its moral greatness, its inestimable privileges, its glorious institutions,—all *this* is what a *free Bible* has done for us. Shall we not *prize* it then ? and *act* as if we did ? it is God's message of love and tenderness sent down to earth, and the earnest breathings of that love is, "*Search the Scriptures.*" Oh, let us do so *daily*. How long has this book lain by us neglected, and yet God bore with that neglect ; it was a tacit insult to him, and he has yet had mercy. It is the fountain of the *purest knowledge*, of the sweetest *rest*, to the human spirit, yea of the richest *joy*, that the heart can ever know.

“ Well, but,” some young reader may say, “ I have read the Bible, and its perusal did not give such joy to me.” This is not unlikely, and here would be the reason, “ *the Bible was read as if it were any other book.*” Now it is not like any other book, and, therefore, should not be read as they.

It is a *mystic cabinet*, and he who reads it merely as a book of history, or of splendid and antique poetry, *may* admire its descriptive passages, so clear and graphic in their pictorial beauty; *may* admire its poetic fire, its rich and gorgeous eloquence, its delicate and beautiful touches, *awaking, in a few syllables, feelings that*

thrill the heart; but all *this* is but an admiration of the *outside* of this mysterious casket. It remains still locked, and its *treasures* are *concealed*. How then are we to come to a knowledge of them? Who can tell us where the secret *spring* is, that can unfold its wealth? The Bible itself tells us this: "If any man lack *wisdom*, let him ask of God."

The same spirit that dictated that book, *must* disclose the richness of its meaning, or it can never be perceived. Let not past failures, in seeking to feel an interest in this precious volume, discourage the reader. The enlightening influence

of God's Holy Spirit is promised to *all*, who ask it *sincerely* of him.

Dear reader ! *seek* the help of that spirit from God. The writer of these pages long laboured under the depressing influence of the spiritual darkness here alluded to ; she sought for the *treasures* of God's word, but they were hidden from her ; and it was only when the light of the Spirit of heaven was shed upon her heart, in answer to *beseeking prayer*, that their glories were unfolded, and heaven seemed to open upon her view. She seeks to lead others to the happiness she gained then. It is the *Pearl* of Life. May it be *thy portion*, reader, in this life ; and may

it gem thy *crown*, in the *everlasting world*. One thing be sure to remember, no one ever gained that crown from any merits of their *own*. Each one who is now in the celestial regions, amongst those redeemed from earth, received that diadem as a gift, procured for them by the death of the Redeemer. Thy right to a crown there, reader, is graven on *his* hands ; *his* feet ; *his* side ; the spear of the soldier wrote it on his *heart*. Every blessing thou receivest is *thine*, because He suffered for thee. He purchased, by his own sufferings, happiness for us all ; if we lose it, it is because we neglect his directions ; if we gain it, we owe it *entirely* to

his *love*. He secures the *Pearl* of Life for those who follow him ; and his path leads out from sin to holiness, and up from *Earth* to *Heaven*. Bright and blessed may thy course be, in following the Redeemer ; and radiant thy crown with his *gift*—the Pearl of Life.

Earth be thus thy path to Heaven,
Time, the day-break from on High,
And the glorious wealth of Heaven,
Then shall *crown* thy destiny.



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